

"IOLANTHE" IN TOMPKINS SQUARE

THE BOYS' CLUB IN ITS ANNUAL
DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE

The Boys' Club of Tompkins Square has added to its dramatic achievements this year by producing "Iolanthe" and Sullivan's "Iolanthe." The club has a membership of 12,000. That is due to the fact that the only qualification necessary for admission is that one shall be a boy, a plain, unvarnished boy; that requirement fulfilled, the use of the big building, with its gymnasium, library, collections, lectures and entertainments, is his. The club is made possible by the interest taken in it by certain rich men.

The play, on the other hand, is made possible by the interest taken in it by Francis Tabor, who is in charge of the club. His special work in the production this year, besides performing the trivial duties of stage manager, prompter, first aid to the injured, head usher and master of ceremonies, consisted in painting the scenery and the boys.

To the latter task he called the help of a half dozen of what the paper issued by the Boys' Club denominates "the female sex," for he explained that was really woman's work. The scenery, depicting an Arcadian landscape and the palace yard, Westminster, he painted alone, with occasional data executed by the Tom Sawyers of the club.

It is no mere band of amateurs whose work was exhibited on the stage of the clubhouse. "Iolanthe" was the fifth production to the club's credit, and many of the cast have taken part for five years in these performances. Last year "Patience" was given, and there are rumors that "The Mikado" will be the next production and that an orchestra from the Boys' Club will be ready for its performance. Then, and not till then, will the ambitious superintendent be satisfied. The fact of having to hire an orchestra is to Mr. Tabor apparently the sole blemish on the performances of the past. This is no

Raphaelite school by no means argues that he can become a fairy without some show of confusion.

In fact the turning of a boy into a fairy is no slight task. If one doubts the truth



PHYLLIS THE NONCHALANT.

of this he should step behind the scenes and witness the transformation.

The stars have no special dressing rooms, and French maids were conspicuous by their absence. Their place was taken by

to the fact that while most dramatic costumes were content to sacrifice verity to personal charm, the costumes for "Iolanthe" which he superintended were absolutely correct. "The lines of the true Greek robe were straight and true, like, for instance, a bag, and there was just a string to draw them up," he remarked, and he illustrated his meaning by a hallo-trope tinted arrangement with silver border which was about to be put on a small



THE FAIRY QUEEN WOULD RATHER PLAY BALL.

tune for the next few months he would have more ice cream invitations than he would know what to do with.

The rule against bouquets, enforced further up town, which has for the last few years prevented stars from sending flowers to themselves, and thereby making a press agent's life more easy, had no popularity here, and particularly on the night set aside for the proud parents the stage blossomed as abundantly as a conservatory. Strephon, in pink silk, was met coming down the steps that lead from one dressing room to the other, and was interrogated regarding the donor of the bouquet which emphasized his encore in the first act. He showed a card with his name, Charles Bergesch, written on it so plainly that there could be no excuse for an enamored usher pretending that he mistook it for some one else's name, a mistake that has been known to happen and not adjusted until the curtain had rung down and the cause for flower giving was over.

"I know who sent it," he said with a toss of his graceful curls. "I know the writin'." It really seemed unduly personal to inquire further, but Strephon looked so proudly complacent that the question hopped to the lips.

"I'm sure mother did. She ain't put her name on, but I know her handwriting."

It was a gorgeous affair of great pink roses and long feathery trails of green. There was an odor of staphanotis about it, and sprays of lilies of the valley lent their grace. It was big enough even to express a mother's pride, and that is saying all that is necessary.

Strephon is an Arcadian shepherd and awfully in love with Phyllis, but that is a stage. Off the stage he looked as proud as a peacock that his mother had sent him the flowers, a lot prouder than if even Phyllis herself had condescended to do so.

He explained the second and last act



IN THE LADIES' DRESSING ROOM.

while he changed his costume from the one all rose color to a long velvet coat, brided with silver, and knickerbockers. A lot of female fairies watched the ceremony, and occasionally handed him safety pins.

"I win out all right, don't I, fellows?" [this to the boys] and I just give the other fellow a run for his money—he simply ain't in it a single minute this last showdown; ain't that so? He looks weak," and then remembering that fame has called him to

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(one cent), George Flatow, told THE SUN reporter that he had acted in one of the former plays and that that front row of boys was about as hard a proposition to face as any young Irving would care to encounter.

While the curtain shut out Arcadia during the intermission, Editor Flatow called attention to his paper. Here are some extracts which show his grasp of current topics, knowledge of human nature and accuracy of diction.

Our boys spoke very well, did not attempt to evade the question at any time, but told the auditors of the great benefits the United States was deriving by occupying the Philippines.

The name of the Primrose League was adopted, first because it suggests visions of the country, flowers and outdoors in general and secondly as a compliment to Mr. Tabor. The way to reform is very simple—play fair.

Through the kindness of Otto H. Kahn twelve members of the Boys' Club attended

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Belasco bow and an utter absence of that Bolasco stage fright which has become almost historic. When he said:

Again we greet you from our seasoned stage, A vet'ran troupe in everything but age.

To-night from that fair fountain undefiled Where drank even 'Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,' We proffer humor too refined to pall And melodies that haunt, but don't recall!

Thrice welcome to the Boys' Club every one: Be young as we are, and enjoy the fun, his voice fitted his lines without any lapping edges. It was only when in costume, he sang his Arcadian lute that you noted his tones were a little like a baseball voice the day after. This is explained by the superintendent, who has taken more than one good singer from his troupe by the moulting process which was attacking Phyllis's high notes.

Phyllis was an ideal lady love for the billows of tempestuous love to rage about. No coquette was ever more noncommittal. There was but a single moment at the rehearsal when he exhibited embarrassment. That was his first experience with bouffant draperies, and he showed an uncertainty as to which way he should walk, forward or backward, and it was not surprising.

But during the performance, whether he was trying to poke a fallen garter through a crack in the floor, exchanging embraces with either lover in a manner that suggested instruction by diagram or winking violently at a hidden suitor in the wings, Phyllis could give cards and spades in self-possession to more seasoned ladies fair.

While the exquisite voices of Iolanthe, the dramatic ability of Patrick Coffey and James Richardson, the two Earias; the majesty of the Grenadier, John Kelly; the heel and toe movements of Celia, Lela and Fleta (Schmidt, Moss and Reiss); the fairies, might please for the time being, it was Phyllis to whom the memory will return, picturesque Phyllis, whose feet flapped, whose shepherdess hat was ever a-tit, who wore a huge silver medal given, he proudly explained, for singing, over the throbbing heart—which organ the Boys' Club never seemed to locate rightly, if gestures are indications of knowledge.

"You don't know what it means to the boys, these productions," said Mr. Tabor, as he shook hands and said good night to every member of the Boys' Club, their relatives third and fourth removed and visitors from all over town who had come by invitation, curiosity and subway.

"The best boys I have, those who go out into the world and get the finest positions,

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To be in Fashion
Get a Private Car

Or at Least Hire One When You Travel—The Fad Has Spread
So That There Are Not Enough to Go Around.

The fad, or the custom, for some people say that it has come to stay, of entertaining one's friends in a railroad car instead of a drawing room has become so popular with Americans, and especially with New Yorkers, that it has actually come to pass that there are not enough private cars to go around.

Ten or a dozen years ago at this time of year an application for a private car was received by the Pullman people with eagerness, and there were a score of cars for the applicant to choose from. Of late, on the contrary, an application for a car at short notice is pretty sure to be greeted with something like this:

"I am sorry, but we have no car disengaged for the date you mention. If, however, the next day will do—" and so on.

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